GANDHI'S CHALLENGE TO CHRISTIANITY

EDITED BY SIR S RADHAKRISHNAN

MAHATMA GANDHI

ESSAYS AND REFLECTIONS
ON HIS LIFE AND WORK

EDITED BY C. F ANDREWS

MAHATMA GANDHI

HIS OWN STORY

MAHATMA GANDHI AT WORK

HIS OWN STORY CONTINUED

MAHATMA GANDHI'S IDEAS

INCLUDING SELECTIONS FROM
HIS WRITINGS

GANDHI'S CHALLENGE TO CHRISTIANITY

BY

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WOKING

TO

MAHATMA GANDHI

WHO MADE JESUS AND HIS MESSAGE REAL TO ME

FOREWORD

It is a pleasure to write a brief note introducing Mr S K George's book on Christianity in India He represents the increasing number of Indian Christians who are alive to the currents of modern Indian life and aspiration and are anxious to bring their faith into an understanding with India's spiritual heritage Whatever the Continental theologians may say, it is impossible for the Indian Christian to resist the impression that God has been present in the age-long struggle of man for light When he sees that under the force and inspiration of Hinduism there has been an uninterrupted continuity for many centuries of saintly souls, true men of religion, who challenge comparison with the best of other religions, he is obliged to concede that the spirit of God has been at work in Hinduism also The fact of Gandhi is a challenge to the exclusive claims of Christianity.

If Europe interpreted Christianity in terms of her own culture, Greek thought and Roman organization, there is no reason why the Indian Christian should not relate the message of salvation in Christ to the larger spiritual background of India. Possibly India's religious insight may help to revivify

Christianity, not only in India but in the world at large.

We have heard of what is called the Platonic tradition in Christianity. Such a celebrated theologian as Dr W. R. Inge regards himself as a representative of this great tradition He is a Christian Platonist. Cannot we have a Vedāntic tradition in Christianity? The late Max Muller thought of himself as a Christian Vedāntin. There are thousands in the West today who have acquired a new and deeper impulse of religious life through the influence of Hindu thought If even non-Indian Christians find it easier to understand Christianity in the light of the Vedānta, it is unfortunate that Indian Christians are led to adopt an attitude of indifference, if not hostility, to Hindu religion and metaphysics It is my hope that this little book may awaken the interest of the Indian Christians to the reality of the problem and help them to give their faith its proper place in India's religious setting

S. R

OXFORD

June 8, 1939

PREFACE

THE articles here collected together were written between the years 1930 and 1939 and represent the reactions of a young Indian Christian mind to the challenge of movements and happenings in India during those eventful years Indian Christianity has had many exponents and apologists but few from among the sons of the soil. *The Christ of the Indian Road* is yet of foreign conception and still speaks the language of conquest and consolidation But the real Christ of India, stricken for the transgressions of her people, standing in with them against oppression and injustice, smitten of God and afflicted and of his travail bringing life and light to the nation, is yet to find embodiment in the Indian Church.

For that many more of her sons and daughters will have to drink the cup of suffering that the Master drank, will have to identify themselves far more completely than they have yet done with the poverty, the ignorance and the suffering of their fellow countrymen. It is the present writer's conviction that Indian Christianity is finding its soul in the travails through which it is passing in common with the rest of India, that the Church in India will embody Christ to India only in the measure in which

it takes upon itself the sufferings of its people For redemptive, suffering love is the central principle in Christianity and the manifestation of it in practice and not the preaching of any dogma is what is needed, is what will convince India of the truth and the power of Christianity It ought to be a matter of supreme thankfulness to the Indian Christian that this principle is not unwelcome or alien to India; that it is the guiding light of India's leading statesman and has received at his hands a practical application on a scale unprecedented in world history. For it is one of the main theses of this book that Gandhiji's Satyāgraha is Christianity in action and that the Christian Church lost one of its greatest opportunities in recent years in failing to fall behind Gandhiji in his great movement for national emancipation on non-violent lines This failure was largely due to the foreign leadership to which it is still so subservient Rid of that subservience, it is the present writer's hope that the Church in India will yet realize the time of her visitation and seize her still present opportunity to take the message of her Master right to the heart of a new India in the making Christ's hope of the Kingdom of God, of the establishment of peace on earth and good will among men, is nearer realization in India because Gandhiji has lived. Not to recognize in him the greatest ally of essential Christianity in India, the greatest worker for the Kingdom of God in the

world today, is to betray gross inability to discern the working of God's spirit To seek to condemn him as an enemy and to "forbid him to prophesy because he followeth not us," because he does not accept the Church's version of Christianity, is to judge him, not by his fruits, but by his label, and might even mean being found fighting against God.

To the Indian Christian who had even dimly perceived these things and was seeking to live in the light of them, these years were a period of a great trial, as well as of a great hopefulness The present writer was fortunate enough to have come under the influence of the great national awakening in his early youth He was a student in Madras during the years 1919–21, when the first great wave of "non-co-operation" passed over the country The hopes it raised, the spiritual exaltation of its great leader, and the devotion it called forth even from the ordinary run of humanity, all these made real to his youthful mind the idealism and the passion of Jesus of Nazareth And the call came to him to devote himself to the work of the Kingdom. Through all the years of faltering and failure, of wandering and weariness, that have followed, he claims to have remained faithful to the vision he had then seen and to have set the hope of the Kingdom in the forefront of his strivings His own inclinations, the pressure of friends and the leading of circumstances led him to the service of the Christian Church.

After a year of lay ministering in an Anglican parish he was sent on for theological training at Calcutta, as a preparation for the ordained ministry of the Anglican Church in Travancore, South India Three years of study and contact with stimulating personalities in his theological college only confirmed him in his conviction that the central thing in Christianity is Christ's message of the Kingdom and that the way to its realization is that of the Cross. He could not help feeling all the time the challenge of the life of Gandhi, living out the principle of the Cross Theological differences kept him out of the ministry of the Anglican Church These differences notwithstanding, he obtained the place of tutor in his theological college This second term of residence in Calcutta synchronized with the Indian Civil Disobedience movements of 1930 and 1932, under Gandhiji's leadership Those were years of great stress of mind to him. A correspondence* with the Anglican Metropolitan in India, over the latter's defence of the Government's use of violence in suppressing a non-violent agitation, almost cost him his position in 1930 When later in 1932 all India was in travail, during the second Civil Disobedience movement, he felt it his Christian duty to appeal to all Indian Christians to take their share in the non-

* This arose out of the Metropolitan–Kumarappa controversy, published in Mr Kumarappa's brochure, *The Religion of Jesus*

violent struggle for India's freedom. He published an appeal to all Indian Christians to join in and to act as custodians of non-violence—as became a community which claimed to believe in the supreme instance of triumphant Satyāgraha the world has seen, viz the Cross of Jesus of Nazareth The Bengal Government took objection to this statement, and two Calcutta papers that published it were penalized. He himself escaped Government prosecution But his sympathy with Indian nationalism was regarded as disloyalty to his college and to the Indian Church, and he had to tender his resignation from the College

Since then he has been without helpful Christian affiliation and has been a lone voice crying out for what he believes to be essential Christianity. He has of late discovered his kinship with liberal movements in Western Christianity, and has hopes of working with them But it is his conviction that an undogmatic Christianity, true to the spiritual insight of Jesus of Nazareth, will yet discover and establish its links with liberal elements in all other religions, and will especially find its rightful place in that larger Fellowship of Faiths that is yet to be Of this Fellowship, Hinduism, with its genuine catholicity, is an earnest as well as a foretaste, though the coming Fellowship will be far more vital and effective than the incoherent mass of present-day Hinduism He himself has found the warmest sympathy from many non-Christian leaders of thought in India.

The present book is an effort to widen and strengthen that sympathy; is like a hand stretched out seeking the grasp of kindred hands, in a joint quest of truth and of the good life, which is what religion is in its essence It is his conviction that conditions are ripe in India for a co-operative effort on the part of all religions to realize truth and justice through non-violence, which is the way of religion India with her genius for comprehension ought to lead the way in that synthesis of religions and cultures that is clearly demanded by the times What has so far stood in the way of such synthesis has been the exclusiveness and the militancy of the missionary faiths that have come into the land But Hinduism, with its genuine catholicity, points the way to a larger synthesis than has yet been achieved

It is the present writer's Christian conviction that Indian Christianity will realize itself, will save itself, in the only sense in which its Master would have it save itself, by losing itself in the larger life of India and of the world to be in the Universal Church of Humanity that is yet to arise, "a Church whose life will be too vast and rich to be called by any of the names that are now familiar to our ears, a Church wise to gather to herself all the best truths that old times have won, but never seeking to build religion on a dogmatic theological idea; and for ever strong to watch, with forward look, for the light that is still to rise from the unspent deep things of God;

a Church whose one demand of all her children is that they shall be pure in heart, and whose worship is founded on one great motive of thought and action, 'Glory to God alone' "*

It is a great privilege to have been allowed to dedicate this humble volume to the Great Soul who has provoked its thought and inspired its message May Christianity today face the challenge of his personality!

The thanks of the writer are due to the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches in England and to the authorities of Manchester College, Oxford, for providing him with the opportunity of a year's residence in Oxford, and particularly to the Principal of the College for setting him free from strictly College work to devote himself to the preparation of this little volume

But he would not have dared to produce it but for the encouragement and help he received from Sir S. Radhakrishnan, Spalding Professor of Eastern Religions at Oxford Dr Radhakrishnan's presence in this historic centre of Christian culture and education is in itself a recognition of the need for understanding between East and West and an earnest of their possible reconciliation. If the series of brilliant books that he is giving to the world comes at present as a disturbing challenge to Christian orthodoxy that is but the disturbance that always accompanies

* S H Mellone in *Back to Realities.*

the first mingling of divergent currents of thought But this acknowledgment of his generous sympathy and help must not be taken to mean that he is in any sense responsible for the main thesis of this book or its presentation His gracious encouragement was due to the fact that he seemed to see in it a glimmering fulfilment of his hope that Indian Christianity will effect a reconciliation between Christian and Indian thought May greater and more capable minds than mine devote themselves to the fulfilment of that hope!

My special thanks are due to the Rev Will Hayes (Brother John, Founder of the Order of the Great Companions) for encouragement and suggestions in bringing out this little book He has very kindly read it in manuscript and also corrected its proofs. He is a pioneer in the West of Humanity's united following after the Great Companions of all ages and countries, among whom Mahatma Gandhi will undoubtedly take his place

S K G.

MANCHESTER COLLEGE, OXFORD
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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

THE author completed this book just before he left Oxford for India in July. The outbreak of war has caused a few sentences to become out of date, but we have decided to leave them unaltered. The main theme is not affected, indeed the coming of war adds significance to *Gandhi's Challenge to Christianity*.

October 1939

I

The Fact of Gandhi

THERE is a book that used to be much in evidence among Christian propagandists in India a few years ago, called *The Fact of Christ*, by Dr Carnegie Simpson. The book opened with the question of Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration, "Who do ye say that I am?" and said that that question was fundamental to every man Another book on the same lines, by the world-famous missionary leader Dr John R Mott, had the expressive title of *Confronting Young Men with Christ* These books and evangelists sought to confront Young India with the fact of Christ—told the non-Christian especially that Christ was a supremely significant spiritual fact and that he had to face up to him. That is certainly true. Christ is a stupendous fact in the spiritual history of man, in the story of human evolution, and everyone ought to face up to him. And the Christian evangelist is right in confronting everyone with that fact

But then Christ is not the only fact in the spiritual

history of the race There are other stupendous facts as well, which it would be foolish for the race to ignore. Lao Tse, the Buddha, and Socrates, to mention only a few of the very outstanding names, are also facts which the race must face up to and draw what inspiration it can from them These, and many others beside them, though dead yet do speak and continue to shed their beacon lights on the pilgrim path of humanity They are, each of them, what has been said of the Buddha

> That Blossom on our human tree,
> Which opens once in many myriad years,
> But opened, fills the World with Wisdom's Scent
> And Love's dropped honey "*

But most of the Great Ones have been unfortunate in the followers they have had These have tried to make a monopoly of each of them, to shut in their scents and their lights within narrow cramping walls, to make exclusive claims for them and thus prevent their light and their perfume from filling the world

I believe that Mahatma Gandhi today is such a spiritual fact, another peak of human achievement, which it would be folly for the race to ignore. It may be fortunate that he is living at a time when nothing is hid, when even the least out of the ordinary thing gets a blare of publicity He has had his share of it.

* Edwin Arnold, *Light of Asia*

The Fact of Gandhi

It is recorded that an American tourist once said that he came to India to see three things—the Himalayas, the Taj Mahal and Mahatma Gandhi But this kind of publicity may not be altogether a blessing. For Gandhiji is not an object to be looked at like the Himalayas, though his uncouth features and his half-naked body might evoke some curiosity. But unlike a natural phenomenon a spiritual fact is a challenge—you have got to do something about it—make up your mind, take an attitude towards it I submit that Gandhi is a spiritual fact of that category

But the last thing the average human mind wants to do with a fact of this order is to face up to its challenge, to meet its demands. It has been said there are two ways in which humanity has tried to dispose of its spiritual leaders One, and this in most cases is the first reaction, is to try to suppress them as dangerous innovators, rejecting them, despising them, giving them the cup of poison to drink or lifting them on the cross of shame; or in these days when seemingly more humane methods prevail, shutting them up in jails or in concentration camps. But that method has repeatedly been found to fail, at least in the case of the greatest of them They are found to reign even from their crosses or their prisons. And so Humanity resorts to the second, the subtler way, of putting them up on a pedestal and worshipping them—calling them Master and Lord, singing

their praises and ascribing uniqueness or divinity to them, but all the time evading their challenge, refusing to follow them But what do these great men care for the homage of those who are not prepared to stand for the causes they stood for, to follow in their footsteps?

Both methods have been or are being tried on Gandhi The first has obviously failed Even the British Government might hesitate to arrest him if he again resorts to Civil Disobedience against it, as well he may at any time But the second and the more dangerous method of shelving him is also being tried So often do we hear it said "Non-violence is all right for Gandhi—he is an exception, a Mahatma: but it will not work for the ordinary man or on a national or international scale" But Gandhiji, like all other great spiritual teachers, would repudiate such a distinction In fact, the essence of their message is that what was possible for them is possible for all others And anyone who has read the story of Gandhi's life in his autobiography will realize from what a very ordinary level of experience, even of sensuous desires, he has lifted himself up to be the great spiritual force he now is. Remember what the Churches have done to Jesus. His Sermon on the Mount has been shelved as an ideal, an impracticable code for the modern man.

There are two things that make the fact of Gandhi peculiarly disconcerting to the Christian propa-

gandist, to the orthodox Christian, and make it a challenge to Christianity. The first is that even the orthodox Christian cannot refuse to admit, what is practically the unanimous verdict of the thinking world to-day, that Gandhiji is living out the Christian ideal, that he has demonstrated how the Sermon on the Mount can be practical politics I think the following judgment of Mr Kingsley Martin, Editor of *The New Statesman and Nation*, will be widely accepted: "I regard Gandhi as probably being of all modern leaders the most faithful interpreter of the philosophy of the Gospels" It is strange indeed when the Christian Church as a whole has turned aside from the fundamental teaching of Christ, *that Love is the Law of Life* (I do not think there is a single Bishop in the Anglican Church who will make a stand against war if England decides to go to war) that a non-Christian should pin his faith to this teaching and make it the basis of his political programme for a country that is almost wholly non-Christian!

It was interesting to come across the following in a recent issue of Gandhiji's paper, *The Harijan* *The Statesman* of Calcutta, one of India's leading papers, under Anglo-Indian management, writing editorially about Gandhiji's advice to the Jews to offer non-violent resistance to Hitler, said "Christ is the supreme example of non-violence and the indignities heaped upon him at his tortured death

proved once and for all that in a worldly and temporal sense it can fail hopelessly." Commenting on this Gandhiji wrote "I was unprepared to find the view expressed by the *Statesman* writer that the example of Christ proved once and for all that in a worldly and temporal sense it can fail hopelessly. Though I cannot claim to be a Christian in the sectarian sense the example of Jesus's suffering is a factor in the composition of my undying faith in non-violence which rules all my actions worldly and temporal. And I know there are hundreds of Christians who believe likewise *Jesus lived and died in vain if he did not teach us to regulate the whole of life by the eternal Law of Love*"

Yes, Gandhi is an inconvenient and embarrassing challenge to Christian orthodoxy. But some orthodox Christians, who cannot help admitting this, have a curious, a disingenuous way of getting round it. I have heard it said by more than one of them "Yes, Gandhi is great, perhaps the greatest man of modern times, but it is the Christ-spirit that is working in him He would have been a greater man if he had been conscious of this and accepted the Lordship of Christ." But Gandhiji gives them no foothold for this contention He has explicitly rejected this claim for Christ It is this which has hardened Christian, and especially missionary, opinion against him of late His outspokenness on this subject has made it impossible for them to

exploit his achievements even in the interests of a comprehensive Christology. It is this which constitutes his other challenge to Christian orthodoxy. Over ten years ago Gandhiji was invited to speak at a Missionary Conference in Calcutta He gladly accepted the opportunity, as nothing delights him more than Christian response to his message It was a very frank talk that he gave them on the subject of why he was not a Christian He told them of his early and long contact with Christian missions, how near he came to becoming a Christian and how in fulfilment of a promise made to a missionary friend in South Africa, not to leave any stone unturned in trying to convince himself of the truth of Christianity, he went to a highly respected Indian Christian, himself a convert from Hinduism, and had the fullest discussion with him on the matter But he said he came away unconvinced and has still remained outside the Church, though freely admitting his indebtedness to Christ. There were questions after the address, and one speaker after another put it to him that Christianity is experience of the Living Christ and if he had not that experience he is no Christian, however faithfully he may follow the teachings To that Gandhiji replied in memorable words to this effect: "I do not know what you mean by the Living Christ If you mean the historic Jesus, then I do not feel his presence But if you mean a spirit guiding me, a presence nearer to me than

hands and feet, than the very breath in me, then I do feel such a presence. If it were not for the sense of that presence the waters of the Ganges would long ere this have been my destination Call it Christ or Krishna that does not matter to me" That I believe is a crucial statement—a testimony to a living experience of spiritual power, borne out by a life of heroic activity, but mediated apart from Christian channels, and therefore testifying to a Source of Power beyond all labels, beyond and behind all historical manifestations of it in time and space

This I believe is a momentous contribution to religious thinking—this positive assertion of an experience of spiritual power and equally so this deliberate denial of all exclusive claims Gandhiji is not a metaphysical thinker but his statement of his fundamental belief is a profound contribution to religious thought. At one time he used to say "God is Truth" Today he reverses the order and says, "Truth is God." That to him includes everything—Love, Beauty, Justice

And the remarkable thing about him is that he makes that the basis of his practical programme He is one who is immersed in the work of this world—even in work that has come to be in some ways the dirtiest of human occupations, the work of the politician. But he has refused to be soiled by it He has insisted on carrying his religion into his politics—in fact, he has no politics apart from his

religion. A famous journalist in India once told him, "Well, Mahatma, I have no religion, politics is my religion" Swift came the Mahatma's reply "Religion is my politics" And he means it Is it not strange that he is the one outstanding politician in the world today who speaks of his ideal as that of building up the Kingdom of God—Rama Raj, as he calls it—and he a non-Christian?

But even more significant than this is the method he has evolved for the realization of that Kingdom It is the method of non-violence, of Satyāgraha. He has clearly grasped and insisted on in practice, what Western thinkers are coming to realize, that means condition ends, that ideal ends cannot be attained by ignoble means, that there are no short cuts to Justice and Peace So insistent is he on this that he has more than once risked his political leadership, even his reputation for sanity, by recalling movements which seemed to succeed, but which had departed from the path of non-violence It is in this, I believe, that he is giving a new lead, breaking new ground in political and religious history For religions so far have relied on preaching and propaganda only to get their principles of love and justice accepted by man and so have had to be content with limited and mainly individual successes only They have lacked a technique of mass action whereby those principles could be made operative in the everyday problems of man and thus overthrow the

reign of evil and selfishness in human relationships Gandhiji's method of Satyāgraha, of non-violent resistance to evil, seems to supply that technique of action whereby Love can resist injustice

"The great problem of this day," said a Professor of mine in Manchester College, Oxford, "is how Love can realize Justice and yet remain Love." I believe the Way of Suffering Love, supremely illustrated in the Cross of Jesus of Nazareth, and now reduced to a science of mass-action by Mahatma Gandhi, provides the answer; and that if the world, especially the Christian world, recognizes the time of its visitation again and responds to the challenge of this supreme spiritual fact, then we might achieve in this generation the greatest revolution the world has yet known—the Non-violent Revolution of Love.

2

Gandhi and Peace

PERHAPS a picture of the man Gandhi is a useful and a necessary introduction, at least to the Western World, to what one may have to say about his message. For the man himself, as well as his methods, is an enigma to the West. During his latest fast, e g , England was a little uncertain as to whether it was a fast or a feast The B B C announcer actually said in his news broadcast that "Gandhi has started his feast," and it was only after many surprised telephone calls that he corrected himself. And a newspaper vendor in Oxford, from whom I bought a paper on the day the news of the breaking of the fast was first announced, told me as if to allay my anxiety, "he has finished his feast." A picture, therefore, of this enigmatic personality will not be out of place. I shall therefore present a picture of the man himself But I propose to do it through two famous word-pictures, originally not drawn of him but to my mind strikingly descriptive of him The application of them to him might seem audacious to some

The first is that famous description of the Servant of God in Isaiah, particularly as it has reference to his physical appearance Christians have commonly found the fulfilment of that picture in Jesus Christ, though Christian piety has greatly altered its lineaments and pictures the Jesus of history as the perfection of physical beauty The original picture is now admitted to be applicable not only to Jesus but to have been a sort of generic picture of the typical Servant of God, whose lot in this world of sin is necessarily one of suffering. It has certainly had its fulfilment in many a faithful Servant of God. And one who has known Gandhi and sensed something of his significance cannot but find a remarkable fulfilment of it in him I shall not take the reader through the whole of that remarkable description and point out its many resemblances to the man Gandhi, lest I weary and perhaps irritate him, though it might be an interesting and a profitable exercise.

But my main purpose in drawing attention to this picture is to give an idea of the physical appearance of this man who has attracted the attention of the world He is a physically small, frail man, hardly weighing a hundred pounds, of uncouth appearance, clad in the dress of Indian peasantry—a loin cloth only. (Everyone has heard of Mr Winston Churchill's horrified picture in the House of Commons of "the half-naked fakir walking up the steps of the

Viceregal Lodge in Delhi.") He is literally "a tender plant, a root out of the dry ground, without comeliness or beauty that we should desire him" A man of sorrows, bearing the marks of the privations, the fastings, the imprisonments he has borne for his people, perhaps for the whole world. One can well understand an English man or woman turning away facetiously from a newspaper photograph of this man And yet he has cast his spell over the millions of his countrymen, not only the illiterate and the poor, but over thousands of the cultured and the well-to-do, who have heard and obeyed his call to follow him to imprisonment, to exile or death. One of the most prominent of his followers is Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru, a man whom the West can understand, for he had all his education in the West. If Nehru had taken to a career open to men of his attainments he might have been a successful lawyer, earning his thousands, like his father, or become a shining light of the Indian Civil Service, instead of being in and out of prison for the greater part of his life at the call of Gandhi. This is what he says of Gandhi "In spite of his unimpressive features, his loin cloth and bare body, there was a royalty and a kingliness about him which compelled a willing obeisance from others Consciously and deliberately meek and humble yet he was full of power and authority and he knew it and at times was imperious enough issuing commands which had

to be obeyed. His calm deep eyes would hold one and gently probe into the depths; his voice clear and limpid would purr its way into the heart and evoke an emotional response."* He goes on to speak of the spell-binding power of this man, which however was not brought about by "oratory or the hypnotism of silken phrases. The language was always simple and to the point and seldom was an unnecessary word used It was the utter sincerity of the man and his personality that gripped He gave the impression of tremendous inner resources of power"

And it is not only we in India who have come under his spell. He has had his fascination for more than one in the West Some of his most devoted workers have come from England and America. One need only mention the honoured name of Miss Slade, known and loved all over India as Mira Bhai, giving up her life as society lady in the West and spending herself in the service of poor village folk in India, under the inspiration of this man An English friend was telling me of another English lady who had met Gandhiji, when he had come to England for the Round Table Conference, and who said, "the moment I shook his hands and looked into his face I felt here was a man I could follow to the ends of the earth." And that in spite of his marred visage and his lowly form

The second picture I want to present is one of

* J Nehru, *Autobiography* (Bodley Head)

his mind and spirit, the quality of his life, which explains the paradox of his uncomeliness and his strange fascination The identification might seem the more outrageous, for it is a picture drawn by an out and out Britisher and was perhaps meant to depict the ideal Englishman. For it is one by Rudyard Kipling, and I have read of Mr. W Churchill saying that every English man ought to learn it by heart It is that remarkable poem of Kipling entitled *If* The application in this case is even more complete and detailed than in the other It reads as if it was written of Gandhi I had learned to love this piece and note its many similarities with Gandhiji, and it was a great delight to learn that Mr Richard B. Gregg had said that Kipling had written an unconscious description of Gandhi. I would ask those who know the piece to go through it with this comparison in mind and see if it does not work And to those who do not know it I would endorse Mr Churchill's advice that they should learn it by heart, even if they should think nothing of the comparison, for it is a remarkable poem There are lines in it which are literally true of Gandhi

> If you can make one heap of all your winnings,
> And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
> And lose, and start again at your beginnings
> And never breathe a word about your loss;

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with kings—nor lose the common touch,

If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster,
And treat those two impostors just the same,

If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,

[There is no man on earth who can give a better account of his minutes and his seconds than Gandhi]

Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!

We believe that is coming true; that in his case the ancient saying, "the meek shall inherit the earth," is being fulfilled And that leads us to the second part of the discourse, the contribution of Gandhi to World Peace, for I believe that his way will yet win acceptance and lead the world out of its present chaos.

Gandhi calls his method of non-violent resistance Satyāgraha It is an Indian word meaning the holding on to or the grasping of Truth. That devotion to Truth is fundamental to Gandhi His whole philosophy of thought and action is rooted in the fundamental conception that the Universe is based on the bed-rock of Truth. It is that which gives him his conviction that the fight for Truth must triumph, however great the odds against it and however few its advocates, for it is the Universe that fights for it.

When a man with that conviction and that courage begins to interest himself in the affairs of this world things are bound to happen.

Naturally, such a man will find himself up against the present world order in many things. For the kingdoms of this world, the transactions between men and between nations, are far from being based on truth, but often on greed and self-interest. That was what Gandhi found in South Africa and later in India. He discovered that the attitude of the British Empire (in which he wholeheartedly believed at one time, and which he once accepted to be what it is still euphemistically called—a Family of Nations) towards his people was not based on Truth, which certainly involves Justice, but on greed and inequality. It was no wonder therefore that he felt obliged to hurl himself against the might of this empire.

His convictions necessarily dictated his method. It is that of strict non-violence. It rests not only on the belief that the Universe is based on Truth but also that man partakes of the nature of this Universe. It involves belief not only in God but in man as well. Bernard Shaw's clever remark that "the vegetarianism of the cow makes no appeal to the tiger," met with Gandhi's retort that he does not believe that the Britisher is all tiger and no man. His method appeals to the essential humanity in man, to that quality by which man has slowly lifted

himself above the law of the jungle. It is to this latent core of humanity in the hearts of men and nations that Gandhi's method makes its appeal, in the sure confidence that the suffering of the innocent victim will convince the wrong-doer of the enormity of his wickedness and will work a change in his heart. That in brief is the method of non-violent fight that Gandhi has evolved, though it would take long to expound its strategy.

It may seem strange that one should be speaking of fight and strategy in discussing Gandhi's way to peace. But that is because his is a militant pacifism. It is unfortunate that the epithet "passive" should ever have been applied to his methods. There is nothing passive about him or his resistance. His is no passive acquiescence in injustice or any avoidance of fight. He realizes as all great pacifists of the world have realized that it is only on the foundation of justice that any real peace can be built. They are all out against those who cry "Peace, peace," when there is no peace. Like Jehu* to whom King Joram sent his messengers to ask, "Is it peace?" they can only answer, "How can there be peace when the whoredoms of Jezebel are so many?" How can there be peace in the world when nations and empires are built on injustice? No, Gandhi has been reckoned among the disturbers of the peace, as one who stirreth up the people; because of his

* 2 Kings ix

relentless exposition of the injustices on which British rule has been, and still is, based in India, and his resolute fight against them That is why he has so often been numbered with evildoers and assigned his place in the prisoner's cell That is why the Nobel Peace Prize has not yet been awarded him, nor will be so long as existing imperialisms distort men's visions as to what real peace means But Gandhi is working for no prize, he is not attempting any mere appeasement, but is aiming at a sure and lasting peace which can only be based on Truth and Justice That is why he pleaded with Great Britain at the Round Table Conference, pleaded with her still more powerfully through Civil Disobedience and imprisonment and does still plead, through friendly co-operation, to settle accounts with India, to make a just and real settlement, that will go far to contribute to world peace

And here I am reminded of a principle of Gandhi's philosophy which he stresses almost as much as that of non-violence That is his principle of Swadeshi—that of limiting oneself, concerning oneself, and contenting oneself, with one's surroundings, one's nation and country This might seem at first sight strange, and a negation of all our wider conceptions of internationalism and human solidarity But it really is not a negation of them, but rather the ground on which alone they have any meaning and reality It is a recognition of our limitations and of

our graded responsibilities and duties It stresses the fact that our responsibilities are primarily towards our immediate surroundings, our homes, our people, our nation and only then to the wider world. Far from being a negation of our accepted philosophy it is a working principle of all our life. To Gandhi it means that his primary duty is towards India, that if he can serve India right, solve her problems on right lines, then he will be making his greatest possible contribution towards setting the world right That is why unlike some other Indian leaders he has not interested himself much in international politics, has not ventured to issue statements about them. I refer to this to draw the lesson that the greatest contribution those in England who are interested in world peace can make to it is to work for a right readjustment of relations within the British Empire That will not only be an example, not only an earnest of the pacific intentions of England, but will go far to remove one of the biggest causes of discontent and unrighteous ambition in other countries. A clear-headed pacifist like Mr. Bertrand Russell sees that. In his book *Which Way to Peace?* he admits that Britain's imperial possessions are one of the greatest provocations to war in Europe, and advocates Britain giving immediate self-government to India and dispossessing herself of the Crown Colonies.

I have drawn attention to this not to canvass

support for the granting of self-government to India, though that would be a consummation devoutly to be wished for, but to indicate to lovers and workers for peace in England what would be the Gandhian way to peace. It would be to concern oneself primarily with things within the Empire, to ask for and to see that Empire relations are based on Truth and Justice That would be Swadeshism for Britain, and the real beginning of internationalism Further, it would mean beginning the fight here and now I think it is a mistake for pacifists to think that their biggest stand for peace is to refuse to fight when there is a war. That I believe is to give the battle to the enemy If you wait till war comes you will be dragooned or betrayed into some kind of war service or thrown into prison as offensive lumber No, the way to win the battle for peace is to take the initiative and to fight for it before a war becomes inevitable, to remove the causes of it, but to fight for it non-violently.

In this again Gandhi shows the way. His method is that of taking hold of some specific wrong, something in your country's policy that means a clear injustice, however small the issue may seem to be, and making a determined stand against it. That was what he did with the salt-tax in India The way of sweet reasonableness comes first, presenting your case to those in authority, exposing the evil, canvassing wide public support. The pacifist demand

for a world conference to settle international differences is clearly on those lines. But what if that demand and similar efforts in the way of sweet reasonableness fails? One of the things that has struck me in England is the ineffectiveness of her great men to make themselves felt in the life of the country England has an imposing array of men and women of the greatest intellect and the soundest ideas, but where are they in the counsels of the nation? Beyond writing letters of indignant protest or sympathy—and there were many such at the time of the Czech crisis—they seem to avail nothing If those in authority do not heed the voice of the people, of the best and noblest among them, there ought to be a way to make them amenable to that voice. Gandhi's way is that of Civil Disobedience, of trying to make the life of that Government impossible by non-co-operation with it, of Civil Disobedience to it This method when wisely applied will galvanize the resistance of a people, and, because it is non-violent and will involve the suffering of those who adopt it, will call forth the latent heroism of a people and will appeal to the best and bravest among them to come in. In fact, a non-violent fight for truth and justice will tax to the utmost the spiritual energies of a people and will be a direct challenge to the real spiritual leaders of a people to come forward and play their part in the active life of their country

I arrived in Oxford at the time when Dr. Lindsay

was fighting his by-election there I rejoiced at it that a man of his standing and calibre should enter active politics The result, of course, was disappointing But it shows how the thing can be done When the spiritual leaders of a country can enter and direct its active politics then that country is on the road to peace, and not far from it. That is what is happening in India under the lead of Gandhi But it means a determined and perhaps a prolonged fight for truth and justice—a fight inspired and sustained by love Strange that in talking about the Gandhian way to peace one should be talking so much of fighting, but that is the only way to attain peace in a world that is based so much on untruth Perhaps even greater effort will be needed to maintain that peace when it has been attained For any peace that we can establish will be one that is continually threatened and which can only be maintained by a jealous guarding of its foundations in Truth and Justice

3

Is Satyāgraha Christian?

A DISTINCTION has been sought to be drawn between the character of Christ's death on the cross and the offer of Mahatma Gandhi to lay down his life more than once for causes that seemed to him to justify the final sacrifice.* It has been pointed out that Christ gave his life and did not take it, while the Mahatma's attempt savours of suicide. I do not think the distinction is real. For Jesus's self-giving is seen upon close study to have been an act of deliberate choice The element of strain and effort apparent in his final decision point to that conclusion Modern students of his life have laid stress upon the evidences to show that Jesus deliberately planned the hour and manner of his death. Indeed, one of the most brilliant of them, Mr. Middleton Murry, has ventured the suggestion that the betrayal itself was a part of Jesus's deliberate design and that

* Gandhi undertook "a fast unto death" on behalf of the "untouchables" in 1932, and again recently at Rajkot to enforce fulfilment of a pledged word

Judas was merely acting as Jesus's agent Be that as it may, it is clear from the narrative that Jesus chose and faced his destiny with determination, knowing that through it he was fulfilling God's purpose for himself. This accords with the emphasis laid by the Fourth Evangelist upon the voluntariness of Christ's death "I lay down my life of myself," says the Johannine Christ, "no man taketh it from me" If a deliberate self-giving of oneself in obedience to a divine compulsion is to be equated with suicide then Christ's death also comes under that category But the great lesson we learn from Christ's teaching as well as his death, and from the example of countless martyrs, who counted not their lives to be clung to, but poured themselves out as offerings on the altars of Truth, Justice or Freedom, is that a man has the supreme right not only to risk his life but to give it away in a cause that he believes to be right and to demand such sacrifice from him. Surely the Mahatma's pure offering of love is not to be condemned on that ground.

If the charge of deliberate courting of suffering and death is to be brought against the Mahatma's latest act it ought with equal force to be levelled against his whole method of Satyāgraha For fasting unto death in obedience to an inner conviction is, Gandhiji himself says, only the final form, the Crown of Satyāgraha The element of deliberate choice, of going out to face danger in order to bring moral

pressure on the object of it, is present in all manifestations of Satyāgraha, from the picketing of a foreign cloth shop to the starving of oneself to death But is not that the very element of newness in it, that which it adds to the practice of Christianity and the other religions which have preached the conquest of evil by love? Satyāgraha reduces to a system the art of grappling with evil, the science of aggressive love attacking evil in its strongholds and dragging it out into the open for a life and death struggle. The Cross of Christ is the supreme, perfect historic example of such assault and victory of love over evil. But, alas, Christianity has made of it a creed, a doctrine, belief in which is to secure a heaven of comfort and security! It was necessary to bring it back from the realm of creed and dogma and set it up again as a working principle of life, still mighty to overthrow entrenched evil and still possible to be lived out. That is what has been achieved by one who does not profess himself to be a Christian, but in whom the central Christian principle of the Cross has again incarnated itself The Christian preaching of forgiveness through the blood of Christ, though it calls forth here and there an emotional response on a mass scale and in individual cases does produce real transformation of character, has not yet availed to relieve the stranglehold of sin and evil on civilization. Christianity seems powerless to achieve the realization of a juster social order, which Christian

ethics agrees with Marxian dialectics in picturing as the goal of humanity. Is there no other alternative to the Communist way of violence for its realization but the ineffective way of Christian preaching? Must the Churches be for ever content with plucking brands out of the fire and abandon the world-order as beyond redemption? Is there not the way of the Cross yet to be tried in seeking to realize God's Kingdom on earth? And is not the application of that way to the everyday problems of life, to the solution even of political questions, what this great non-Christian shows in his method of Satyāgraha? The Cross of Christ can yet be a working principle of conquering love overcoming evil everywhere

Of course, Satyāgraha is open to gross abuse It might be resorted to for silly and unjust causes. But is not every other good principle and method liable to similar misuse? And surely the remedy is not to discard it altogether. The best safeguard of the sanctity of Satyāgraha lies in the increasing number of pure offerings of it, whereby its essential principles will be grasped by the people at large and false manifestations of it will cease to coerce individual or public opinion For Satyāgraha, in its essence, is not a method of coercion but of conversion Its appeal is to the conscience of the evil-doer, and its strength lies in the justice of the cause it espouses. Where its cause is not just and its methods are not pure it ought not, and when the method is widely prac-

tised will not, move the conscience of the people. For its fundamental principle that Truth is dearer than life itself will be turned against false expressions of it and people will refuse to be coerced into giving up the right out of any sentimental regard for the life of the false Satyāgrahi. Mahatma Gandhi was asked after his recent fast at Rajkot the question: Suppose the Prince of Rajkot or one of his advocates had undertaken a fast for the very opposite cause to what Gandhi was fasting for, whom was the Viceroy to satisfy? To that Gandhi replied that the Viceroy need not satisfy one or the other but simply do the right thing For Satyāgraha is a challenge to the conscience of each individual to do his duty, to do the right thing, regardless of consequences to oneself or others. It is a practical application of the teaching of Christ that he that loseth his life shall find it, that one realizes one's true and larger life in the pursuit of the eternal values, even though the way to it may lie through the death of the physical body.

Another element of safety in the practice of Satyāgraha is its demand for the inner guiding voice of God Satyāgraha is only to be undertaken at the call of God He it is "who alone can order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men," and who alone can make the suffering of the innocent change the heart of the indifferent. If self-chosen, unmerited suffering on behalf of the sinner be Christian, is

not the inspiration and the guidance to it peculiarly so? Do not Christians claim to be the Pentecostal people, living under the direct control and guidance of the spirit of God? If we accept the Cross as a working principle for the everyday work of redemption can we not rely on the spirit of God to guard us from false choices and to make our offering touch the hearts of those for whom it is made? Surely Satyāgraha can be and ought to be used as a Christian weapon in the fight for truth and justice in the individual and in society, to which the Christian is committed by his profession Christians ought therefore to be profoundly thankful to the Mahatma for his demonstration of the potency and practicability of the method of the Cross, and to ponder over the significance of his latest offering of love which has compelled the attention of the world. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends"

4

The Cost of Christianity

It was one of the lessons that Jesus found it most difficult to teach his disciples and hence had need to reiterate more than once that life, as he lived it and wanted men to live, always costs. Often it can only be entered into and lived at the cost of things that men hold most dear; sometimes even of life itself. Thus we hear him speak of the cup of suffering and the baptism of death which he and those who would share life with him must accept, however bitter the experience of them might be. This must be so, so long as human society and the kingdoms of this world are organized apart from God. Politicians speak of making the world safe for democracy. I wonder if there can ever be such a thing as the world being safe for Christianity. Christianity is so explosive a thing for the practice of it ever to be a safe or a tame affair; unless it be in Heaven or in a Kingdom of God on earth, if such a contingency is ever going to happen. But the opposite process, of Christianity being made safe for the world, has been

going on ever since its first appearance on earth, with the result that its custodians and interpreters are today among the safest men on earth and the best safeguards for the things that be

But Christianity when it first entered the world wore another aspect. In its simple faith in a loving Father and its hope of a Kingdom of God it challenged entrenched authority and asserted the right of man as a child in God's universe Of its earliest preachers it was said that they were people who turned the world upside down The idolaters of Ephesus, who brought this charge against St Paul and his companions, showed a truer insight into the implications of Christianity than its exponents and ecclesiastics of the present day, who invoke its sanctions for upholding the order of the world as it is, in the interests of what they consider peace and safety. For Christianity, or life according to the will of God, is ever a challenge to a world order based on anything but that undiluted will So it has ever been since men began to walk in the fear of God and to be moved by the knowledge of that good and perfect will For the understanding of it lays upon man the duty of seeking to fulfil it, since in the fulfilment of that alone can he or the world find true peace. But seeking to fulfil it he finds himself, too often, pitted against the world order Thus it was, e g., in the case of the Old Testament prophets. They were accused of being disturbers of peace by those who

failed to understand the secret of peace. Thus has it been in the case of all men of God, of whom the world was not worthy, and whom therefore it condemned to the hangman or to the flames. Thus will it be till that City, which they sought for, of which the builder and maker is God, is established four-square on this earth, which has seen of their travail and may yet be satisfied with it.

This truth that Christianity witnesses to is of cosmic significance. We see it woven into the very texture of life. "Life," says a great writer of modern days,* "wherever you encounter it, even in the lowest of its physical forms, is always pang-born and to some extent pang-sustained. And if that is true of our physical life, it is more obviously true of the life of the intellect, of the imagination, of the moral consciousness All the great ideals of humanity are pang-born. They are the answers which the heroic spirit of man has given to the challenge of suffering, to the challenge of frustration, to the challenge of bereavement, to the challenge of death, to the challenge of pain in one or other of its innumerable forms." "Out of sorrow has the world been built, and at the birth of a child or a star there is pain," says another †

"It has been said," writes Dr. Jacks, in his *Religious Perplexities*, "that Christianity reduced to its

* Dr L P Jacks in *The Art of Living Together*

† Oscar Wilde in *De Profundis.*

simplest and most intelligible form needs only two words to express it—'Follow me' It has been said also that if all Christian men for the next twenty years would give up the attempt to *explain* Christ and devote their attention to *following* him, at the end of that time they would know more about the person of Christ than they had ever known before, and they would put Christianity in a posture to conquer the world I accept all that But whoever sets out to follow Christ will have to follow him a long way and to follow him to some dark places Easy enough while the road runs by the shining shores of the Lake of Galilee, but not so easy when it turns into the Garden of Gethsemane and becomes the Via Dolorosa. To follow Christ is to follow a victor in life's battle, a conqueror over suffering and death, through the completeness of his loyalty to the Great Companion Hence the power which makes his teaching live, hence the driving force which makes his Gospel effective for the regeneration of society"

Christianity has got to recapture this fundamental element in its teaching. A religion which has the Cross for its centre and its symbol ought never to forget that it was pang-born and that the values it stands for can only be conserved and enshrined in the heart of a world it seeks to save by the willing endurance of pain It is this great lesson that is being emphasized anew by that true servant of God, Mahatma Gandhi.

Whatever the judgment of the world may be on his politics, his understanding and interpretation of the significance of suffering, of the meaning of pain, will be accepted as a message from God to the times, perhaps a much-needed message to a world that has not yet, in spite of nineteen centuries of Christianity, understood the Way of the Cross It may be that when his politics are forgotten he will chiefly be revered by future ages for the measure in which this great principle has attained incarnation in his life.

5

Christian Missions in India

THE story of the missionary enterprise of Western Christendom in the East is a record of heroic adventure on the part of the men and women who went forth on it, and of equally heroic self-giving on the *part of its supporters in the home Churches* The widow's mite, we are told, has contributed no inconsiderable part of the enormous budget of Christian missions; while for the early missionaries at least it meant real adventure and a passion for souls to go out into strange and distant lands and face unknown dangers

If the missionary enterprise of the Western Churches synchronized with or followed in the wake of the commercial and military expansion of the Western nations, it only shows how all human activities are linked together and stimulate if they also corrupt each other Thus "the Catholic missionary orders of the sixteenth century accompanied the explorer-conqueror or preceded him The Protestant missionary of the eighteenth and nine-

teenth centuries followed in the wake of trade"* If this association with the explorer-conqueror and the exploiting trader has been rather unfortunate for Christian missions, it has to be remembered that the association was almost inevitable and that missions represent the better, the redeeming, side of the impact of the West upon the East.

It is interesting to note that the mere trader and conqueror often objected to the incoming of the missionary as a disturbing factor in his process of exploitation Thus William Carey, the great English pioneer missionary, had to find refuge in what was then the Danish settlement of Serampore to elude the prohibition to missionary work in India maintained by the East India Company. The directors of that trading, and soon conquering, corporation, showed real insight into the implications of Christianity when they regarded its dissemination as dangerous to their continued domination in the country Christian missions have undoubtedly contributed their share to the new awakening in India of which a heightened national consciousness is but one expression. The *rapprochement* that has since come about between the missionary and the British Government in India, by which missions act under the aegis of the Government and the missionary is bound to acquiesce in all the acts of the Government, is really more inimical to the objective of the

* W E Hocking, *Rethinking Missions*

missions than their one-time antagonism But on the whole there is no denying the fact, as the Laymen's Enquiry Commission puts it in their report, that the missions represent an expression of good will, of willingness to serve and give of one's very best, and there ought to be no time when such expressions of good will should cease, perhaps they are more needed at this time than ever before, when nations are so much thrown together and yet seem to be in danger of devouring one another for lack of that very good will and understanding The great question is how that good will should find expression under the changed conditions that exist in the mission field at the present time, changes to which missions themselves have contributed their share.

Christian missions as originally conceived and undertaken had an openly avowed objective and a clear-cut programme The one objective was to impart the saving knowledge of the one and only revelation of God to the millions who were believed to be perishing for lack of that knowledge Preaching the word, disseminating the knowledge of the Scriptures, baptizing those who believed and gathering them into the fold of the Church, away from the contagion of their heathen surroundings—these were as clearly defined items in the programmes of the early missionaries as was the scheme of salvation they believed in Works of philanthropy, social uplift, medical aid or education service, were all undertaken

with the sole object of furthering the one end of saving the souls of the people to whom such services were offered. The scruples that perplex the sensitive modern missionary, in the face of non-Christian criticism of his methods, as to whether it is right to use these philanthropic services to one's fellow men as baits to attract them to one's religious fold did not so much as occur to his predecessors Every item of missionary enterprise was meant to subserve the supreme end of evangelism, and was expected to yield tangible results in conversions Even the task of higher education in India, to which missions have devoted a very great deal of resources in men and money, was undertaken with the evangelistic end in view Western education, it was hoped, would prove a preparation for the Gospel—a hope that has to a great extent been falsified and been largely abandoned Since the recent report of the Lindsay Commission, missionary education is directed to serve the less ambitious end of equipping Indian Christians rather than that of evangelizing India through the education of her youth. The increasing assumption by the Government of the task of education, in all its stages, and the restrictions imposed on the use of education as a means of evangelization, have deprived missions of their lead in educational service and an important avenue of missionary effort

The same is true of most other lines of missionary service, which were entered upon in all good faith

as means of evangelization. It was the love of Christ that constrained the missionary to come out to the foreign field and give himself in service to the brother for whom Christ died, and what more natural than that he should seek to use every means, every approach, to make that brother share in the saving grace of that sacrificial death The love of man as man, and the duty to serve him as such—not as a prospective convert to any sect—and the belief that this life has a value in itself, other than as a preparation for a realm of future rewards and punishments, are modern conceptions, and the pioneers of missionary work are not to be condemned for not sharing that outlook or for adopting the means that seemed justified by their noble objective.

But not so their present-day successors They are faced with a changed outlook and a different situation The modern mind sees that health and sanitation, education and social uplift are good in themselves and are the undeniable right of every individual, and that these ought to be provided as good in themselves and their provision not used as means to realize other ends Further, the modern conception of the State makes the provision of these a charge upon Governments and the prevention of their exploitation a duty of the State That not only deprives the missionary of fruitful avenues for the spreading of his message, but presents him with a testing and a rethinking of his motives. Is his love

of his fellow man but a cover for his selfish devotion to his own creed? Ought he to engage in much-needed service when such service may not lead to acquisitions to his Church or sect? Can he rejoice in removals of injustices and provision of services, even when these are not accomplished by himself and may even retard his objective of gathering people into his fold?

Such a crucial testing was presented to the Christian missionary in India by the recent achievements in the removal of age-old injustices to the untouchables of India It was from this so-called submerged sixth of India that Christian missions had in the main been drawing their converts But as the result of the leavening influences of Christianity the Hindu conscience has been awakened towards this crying evil and great efforts are being made to have it removed Mahatma Gandhi's devotion to this cause is prior to and more intense than that to any other of the innumerable issues with which he is connected His Harijan Sevā Sangh, organized after his great fast on behalf of the untouchables, has branches all over India and is vitally affecting the life of these people, who are now collectively known by the beautiful name he has given them of Harijan—the people of God. As an earnest of their all-India emancipation the young Maharajah of Travancore has given the untouchables of his state the right of entry into all Hindu temples on equal

terms with all other Hindus These efforts mark the beginning of an awakening in Hinduism that is bound to go far and deep.

But how have the Christian Churches and Missions met this awakening? Instead of rejoicing at the removal of an injustice—an injustice that had infected Christian communities as well, for caste distinctions are not unknown among Christians in India, too—and the purification of a sister religion, Christians have shown a tendency to pick flaws and impute motives to it, for the obvious reason that it would stop the flow of converts to the Christian Churches Missionaries, e.g , have on the whole been inclined to accept and magnify the claim of Dr Ambedkar to represent the depressed classes over against Gandhi, because the former threatened to lead an exodus of his people from Hinduism to what they fondly hoped would be the Christian Church, though the doctor himself was expressly undecided as to which his promised land was to be, the only thing he looked for being the securing of highest political advantages for his people. In spite of all wooing and bolstering up, Dr. Ambedkar still remains undecided and with as little appeal as ever to those in whose name he claims to speak, while the whole Harijan population is fast being assimilated into the general Hindu community.

Much has been said and written about methods of missionary approach to non-Christians, as to what

constitutes proselytism and what is implied in the genuine right of conversion I do not think there is real divergence of opinion on these things I trust Gandhiji's dictum on the matter will be universally accepted · that religious missions must, like Caesar's wife, be above suspicion The religious worker can never be too scrupulous as to the motives and methods that he employs. If his object is conversion, if he believes, with Dr Kraemer, that the only attitude the Church can take towards India's outcastes is to do its utmost to bring them under the dominion of Christ, then he ought not to hedge about that objective or veil it under cover of helping them to fulfil natural aspirations, for there is no indication that left to themselves they would lift their eyes in the direction of the Church, as the learned doctor assumes That is where the Indian appreciates the candour alike of the early missionary and of his fundamentalist successor, who make no secret of their motives and are prepared to face opposition and forgo aid and protection from "heathen governments." But the type of missionary who bewails the changed conditions and finds in them obstructions to his objectives is one who is unwilling or unable to press home his call to conversion The blunt appeal to "come out and be separate," he finds will call forth no response and in fact he is often unable to sound it because increased knowledge and contact with other religions have taught him

that they are not wholly evil, nor altogether to be scrapped He therefore uses specious words like "sharing" and "co-operation" with other faiths while what he really means is "giving" and "conversion." It is the disingenuousness that is often involved in this position that causes the misunderstanding and the heartburning that exists wherever the missionary approach is made in India today.

For what an awakened Hinduism resents is not so much the methods of Christian Missions—methods are but an expression of the faith—but the content of the message itself. Dr. Kraemer in his book, *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*, shows real insight when he stresses the distinction between the essentially mystical and non-dualistic background of all Hindu thinking and the transcendentalist and salvationist conception of Christianity which has stereotyped itself in Christian orthodoxy and which is sought to be revived in what he calls the school of Biblical realism of to-day He therefore does not set much store by the efforts so far made by Indian Christian scholars like Dr Appaswamy merely to clothe the orthodox Christian doctrines in terms borrowed from Indian heritage. He rightly points out that no amount of Indian terminology will bridge the gulf between the Hindu conception of God's continuous incoming into the world order, "moving a man among men, when righteousness declines and wickedness is strong, succouring the good and

thrusting evil back,"* with the one and only incarnation of the transcendent God, in the Jesus of history But he forgets that this position of Biblical realism is riddled through and through with difficulties, historical and metaphysical, and is the one position that a Christianity that would come to terms with thinking, instead of seeking, as Dr Schweitzer puts it, "to take the place of thought," has ever been in difficulties in maintaining. He does not face, e.g , the undoubted apocalyptic element in the Gospels, which is so bound up with the divine claims of Jesus and so invalidates those claims.

In his chapter on Islam Dr. Kraemer admits that this claim of unique revelation, seeking no sanctions from thought but imposing itself on the human mind as the expression of Divine Will, stands confronted with the similar but contradicting claim of Islam. Against that impregnable rock he can only counsel patience, but no amount of patience can wear down the opposition between systems of implicit belief, each claiming infallible authority. And, as Professor Radhakrishnan points out, orthodox Islam is not the only rival to such claims of Christian orthodoxy. National Socialism in Germany today, with its supra-rational belief in and demand for unquestioning obedience to its inspired Leader, presents a kindred though contradictory phenomenon.

Dr. Kraemer advises Christian missionaries to

* Bhagavad Gita iv.

harbour no illusions about the easy breakdown of the tenacity and the resistance of Islam to the Christian approach It were good if Christian Missions realized also that in Hinduism they have to face a religious outlook that is even more tenacious than the stolid orthodoxy of Islam The flabbiness and nebulousness of Hinduism has given it an impression of vulnerability But it is really an expression of an elasticity and comprehensiveness that is sure of its strength and therefore only seems to offer no resistance Even Islam, in spite of the inroads and conquests it has made in the field of Hinduism, has mellowed and deepened under the impact with the older religion till there has developed even within its strait and narrow system a movement that is universal and vitally spiritual Dr Kraemer regards this mystical development in Islam as an alien growth and would not look to it for the establishment of any *rapprochement* between Christianity and Islam Mysticism is to him a dangerous product of naturalistic monism If that is true then a very great deal in the religious heritage of Christendom must also be written down as dangerous aberrations, and this bleak and barren creed of Biblical realism with its supra-rational doctrine of a unique revelation must fight its way till it batters down all opposition and establishes world dominion, much as the Nazi Fuehrer would do if he could. To picture or present Jesus to the world as a religious Fuehrer

is the worst disservice that can be done to him or to religion.

But tendencies other than Biblical realism in Christian thinking, and the genius of Hinduism, as it has expressed itself in its contacts with other religions, give ground for a different hope from the meeting of the two religions on Indian soil In the early formative centuries of Christian thinking various elements entered into its development and modified the original core of its message Unfortunately the process was once for all officially halted and the syncretist achievement of the early centuries was codified in creeds and handed down as a fixed deposit of the faith But in spite of this, Christian thinking has constantly been enriched by other systems and there have all along been spirits who went beyond the bounds permitted by Church and creed and realized experiences that transcended all definitions Further, the hard crust of doctrine, zealously guarded by the Churches, with threats of excommunication and eternal damnation, has crumbled under the expansive influences of increasing human knowledge Today this battered Christian creed is thrown into the melting-pot of religions and civilizations, which is what the world is at the present time. Particularly in India it comes into the closest contact with Hindu thinking. The Hindu world view is something that has maintained itself for centuries and is finding new life today Is

reconciliation possible between that and Christian thought? Is there a place in it for the personality and ethic of Jesus, for the cult and devotion centring round him? The Hindu will not say no Hinduism is no closed, no creedal system It has certainly a place for Jesus among the many leaders and teachers it reverences as revealers of God to man, nay, as incarnations of God in His aspect of the Lover and Redeemer of man Its conception of a Favourite God, Ishta Devatā, would sanction even an exclusive worship of him to those who find in such adoration the way to God-realization But it would definitely place him in its own setting among the diverse modes and ways in which the Unfathomable and the Eternal manifests itself to mortal minds Who can say that this is not the setting in which he will find his permanent place in the religious heritage of the race, at any rate in India?

It is an adventure of the spirit, as well as a daring exercise of the consecrated intellect, to which the Indian Christian and the discerning missionary is challenged by the religious situation in India But if the Christian thinker in India might well tremble at the immensity of his task and the uncertainty of the goal it might lead him to, he has great examples in the history of Christian thought to encourage him to go forward Christianity has rooted itself in the West, not by displacing the great intellectual and cultural traditions of Europe, but by incorporating

them into its own systems of thought The great creative periods in Western Christian history are those when the Platonic and Aristotelian systems of thought were wedded to the original Semitic strand in the Christian heritage If to Clement and Origen the Greek philosophers were schoolmasters leading them to Christ, if St. Augustine could interpret Christianity in Neo-Platonist terms, if the synthesis between Christian and Aristotelian thought worked out by St. Thomas Aquinas could become the basis of Roman Catholic orthodoxy, if in modern days a leading Christian scholar like Dean Inge can describe himself as both a Platonist and a Christian, why should not the attempt be made to incorporate Hindu thought, which is far more pronouncedly religious than Greek thought ever was, with the Christian? It is to such an interaction between Christian and Hindu thought that discerning minds in the West are looking for a new flowering of human culture "A E" e.g, says,* "If Europe is to have a renaissance comparable with that which came from the wedding of Christianity with Greek and Latin culture it must, I think, come from a second wedding of Christianity with the culture of the East." The world yet awaits the real assimilation of the Christian Gospel into the religious heritage of India

* *The Living Torch*, edited by Monk Gibbon

6

A Vision of the Future

A THING that will strike even the most casual visitor to India at the present time is the swiftness with which the scene is changing in that country and the immensity of the changes that are coming over the life and outlook of the people The whole nation is seething with a new life and there is no foretelling the shape of things to come

The influences of modern education on Western lines, imparted in the schools and universities for close upon a century now, though directly touching only a small percentage of the population, have been slowly percolating to the masses. Modern methods of transport have been breaking down barriers and making impossible the observance of many of the old caste regulations. Missionary inroads upon the ancient faith of the land, challenging it to a life and death struggle, and creating centres of Christian life throughout the country, have also contributed to the disturbing of the placid waters of ancient life

Powerful reform movements like the Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj and the Ramakrishna Mission, have also worked from within the old faith, to rid it of its many accretions and give it a new power But above and more than anything else, the spirit of nationalism in the country, rising up against continued foreign subjugation, has roused the entire nation All these have contributed to the new awakening in the country and made it a veritable melting-pot out of which a new nation is to arise

This is a supreme opportunity for any philosophy or religion to make its contribution to the new structure Communism, e g , has seen the opportunity and is making a great bid for the soul of India Surely Christianity in India, if it has anything vital to give, should regard this as its greatest opportunity, the crisis in which it is to find its fulfilment But it can only do that if it is prepared to act upon its own principle of being the little leaven leavening the whole lump, instead of seeking to consolidate itself as a rival organization over against the ancient religion of the land

But so far Christianity in India has been represented by missionary efforts and these have tried the opposite method of drawing out its converts from the life of the people as a whole The appeal to the convert has been to come out and be separate from his kith and kin Indians were to be saved out of their ancient faith. It was to be a case of replacing the old

by the new Hence any attempt at assimilation of the Christian teaching by the Hindu, without complete acceptance of the Christian creed, was regarded as worse than complete refusal Thus Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the founder of the Brahmo Samaj, was bitterly attacked by devoted missionaries for holding out to his countrymen "the Precepts of Jesus" as a guide to peace and happiness Though the missionary attitude has greatly changed in recent years, yet the roots of it are still there. Missionaries as a body are not particularly happy, at the present time, about Mahatma Gandhi's testimony to the essential soundness and practicability of Christ's teachings (invaluable as such testimony is, when even Archbishops could speak of "the massing of might" as the only practical policy for a Christian country), because he is not a Christian in their sense of the term There is a growing opposition to him in Christian circles in India because his rejection of the exclusive claims of Christianity is more clearly understood of late and even the missionary hope of his leaving the fold of Hinduism is fading out No, Christianity in India has not yet had the courage to throw itself into the melting-pot of India's new life, risking its own in the process

It is interesting, in this connection, to note that there was a small community of Christians, the Syrian Christians of Malabar, settled in the country perhaps from the beginnings of the Christian era,

which by its isolation from larger bodies of Christians and its envelopment by Hindu influences, did work out a *rapprochement* with Hinduism It settled down as a caste or community within Hindu society, accepting beliefs like the transmigration of souls and that Christian baptism was not essential for salvation. It is interesting that these were the doctrines denounced as heretical when the Roman Church, with the aid of the Portuguese power in the sixteenth century, attempted the wholesale conversion of this community to Roman Catholicism. But since its revived contact with the Western Churches, this little Church, in all its many sections, has gone back upon its *rapprochement* with Hinduism and is now stolidly orthodox.

But this *rapprochement*, though historically interesting and showing how the thing is possible, was itself effected at a low level and at a time when one at least of the interacting religions was not very much alive Hence there was very little of active give and take, and the two existed side by side without vitally affecting each other. But the survival of this small community through the centuries and its material prosperity under Hindu rulers show the tolerance of Hinduism and its willingness to assimilate other faiths, provided these are prepared to shed their exclusiveness and militancy.

This attitude of tolerance and assimilation has remained true of Hinduism throughout her long

history. She has been able to do it because of the nature of her evolution and the character of her outlook The simple nature worship of the Aryans came early in contact with the cruder animism of the earlier settlers in the land. Instead of annihilating these or their beliefs the Aryans relegated them to a lower level in society and gave a protecting sanction to their cruder faith Their own higher thinking, the conception of the One Reality behind all phenomena, gave the sanction to their recognition of even the lowest forms of belief as *acceptable to this all-comprehending Reality* True this has often meant a too easy tolerance of the crudest superstitions This easy-going comprehensiveness and acquiescence in a vast mass of superstitions on her fringe proved a great weakness when Hinduism was faced with the proselytizing efforts of the well-organized and militant missionary faiths that invaded the land. Her own preoccupation with ultimate values in her higher thinking left her indifferent to the material welfare of her people and without the incentive to educate and uplift the submerged classes in society.

But all this is changed now Partly through the impact of the more active faith and culture of the West, but more especially through an awakened sense of nationalism that irks to throw off a foreign domination, the people are alive to the needs and the demands of the age, of the present world order

Indian thinking wherever it is virile tends to forget its spirituality It is the Westerner who now extols Indian spirituality—men like Paul Brunton, who upholds a Ramana Maharshi as typical of India's genius True such types have an abiding appeal to the Indian mind, but for the present Indian youth is not captivated by such recrudescences It demands action heedless of what sanction religion may or may not give to such temporal activity Modern Communism is having an ever-increasing appeal to, and may find a fertile soil in, India A reawakened religion, when it asserts its supremacy, will have to reckon with this factor of a new-found belief in life, life on this earth

Perhaps the lines of this reassertion are already indicated by the one Indian leader who has not lost his moorings in Indian spirituality, and has at the same time assimilated the creative activism of the West to a remarkable degree Mahatma Gandhi claims to be a Sanatana Hindu, in spite of all his reforming zeal and revolutionary activity He makes that claim because he accepts the authority of the Vedas, though he is far from granting their verbal infallibility, because his ethics is rooted in India's essentially non-dualistic and spiritual outlook on life, symbolized in what he calls cow-protection, and expressing itself in the practice of Ahimsa; and because he admits the need of variety in religious belief and practice, an admission which underlies

his principle of equal reverence towards all religions It is significant that while he openly acknowledges his indebtedness to Christian ethics he claims to find the roots of his own in Hinduism itself He has not had to go outside his own religion to find terms to express his goal or his method. He calls his goal "Rāma Raj," the equivalent of the Kingdom of God, because Rāma to the Hindu mind symbolizes the ideal of earthly kingship And he finds examples of supreme devotion to ethical ideals within Hindu mythology Ethical activity is certainly one of the ways of God-realization in Hinduism. But even this is set against and held to find its fulfilment in spiritual discernment—in Jnana—which recognizes the One Doer behind all human agents This is the doctrine of the Bhagavad Gita, which to Gandhi is the guide of conduct far more than the Christian Gospel

Perhaps an important difference between the Hindu and the Christian attitude towards ethical activity and its value is found in Gandhi's oft-repeated assertion that to him the primary goal of all his efforts is God-realization—that all his temporal activity is but the process of his release from all activity That gives to his spirit a detachment from the results of his actions. It saves him from the desire to "see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied," the clinging to results in this life or the next, which is at the root of the Christian belief in personal

immortality. But this ethical strain in Hinduism is so mixed up with other elements that it takes a master spirit like Gandhi to see and live it in its exacting demands; and such is the exuberance of the other elements in it that even his witness might be submerged and the sting and the challenge removed out of it by himself being added to India's already crowded pantheon

It is here, I think, that Christianity can make its best and most useful contribution. The strength of Christianity lies in its emphasis, almost to the exclusion of everything else, upon ethics, upon the moral holiness of God and His demand of such holiness from man—upon morality as the way to union with God. It has dared to picture God as man at his highest and best and thus to exalt man But in doing this it puts man almost at the centre of the Universe, making the redemption of his individuality and its survival the central theme of its message Its naive dualism of Good and Evil, struggling for the possession of the individual soul, satisfied it in its early days, but it has had to make continuous adjustments with ever-increasing human knowledge But, as its wisest exponents realize, its strength lies not in explaining the World or Evil, but in overcoming them. This it does by its principle of active love, which the insight of its Founder revealed to be at the heart of things That apprehension is its highest contribution to Religion, and

its strength lies in the clarity of its emphasis on that and the thoroughness with which it practises that. If it lives up to that demand it will find itself at one with the new flowering of Hinduism in Mahatma Gandhi, and will contribute towards its fruition and perpetuation

It may be that Christianity in India will have to accept the wider setting against which the Hindu sees even his ethical activity It may be temperament, tradition or natural environment that has given India its characteristic outlook on life, its realization of kinship and oneness with all that lives A Christianity naturalized in India will have to discover itself in that larger setting. Wandering about in Hindu temples with their overwhelming massiveness the realization came to me that nothing will be able to replace those giant structures or the faith they express in granite The Christian churches I had seen in India seemed ephemeral in comparison It was only in England that I felt the same about Christianity Standing under the dome of St Paul's, in London, it occurred to me that here was the same phenomenon of a religion going down to the depths of a nation's being and expressing itself in a vastness symbolic of that depth Christianity can never hope to replace Hinduism in India, just as nothing can replace Christianity in England

Nor should the attempt be made Any new light, any new emphasis that another religion may bring,

must be added to the ancient faith, rather than seek to blot out the ancient light. Some time after I had that experience in the Hindu temple I happened to see a Christian church built in Hindu style, as some Christian churches are coming to be built in India, and I was reminded of some of the smaller shrines adjoining the central structure in Hindu temple yards, and I seemed to see a vision of the future of Christianity in India, existing by the side of, never seeking to displace, the giant structure of Hinduism, but keeping the light of its own ethical knowledge of God bright and clear, that it may not be overlooked, whatever else the worshipper may find inside the great temple to satisfy the myriad needs of his whole self, which perhaps only a religion that has entered into the marrow of the life and culture of a people can wholly satisfy

7

Inter-Religious Co-operation

SPEAKING at the convocation of the Muslim University at Aligarh, during his recent visit to India, Lord Lothian asked the searching question of India's great religions whether they will withstand the impact of the modern critical and scientific spirit better than the religious orthodoxies of the West have done. The recent report of the Archbishops' *Commission on Christian Doctrine in the Anglican Church*, cautious and compromising as it is, shows how much the ancient faith has been battered by the inroads of modern knowledge India is a place where meet not only Science and Religion but the different religions as well So far they have met in conflict, seeking to oust each other out of their possessions, though there have been a few illustrious instances of efforts at comprehension and co-operation For the different religions of the world have not yet consciously faced the challenge of their inter-mingling, nor the challenge of modern science to their ancient orthodoxies and, least of all,

the far greater challenge of modern life with its pressing needs and demands

If Religion is to meet these challenges it must do so in its united strength, conserving all the forces of the Spirit in its manifold manifestations and not wasting them in internecine conflict to assert the superiority of one religion over another. For, as Dr. L P Jacks says. "Behind the battle of the creeds lies the battle of life—a much more strenuous affair Wherever the seriousness of the greater battle is deeply felt, the acrimony of the lesser is mitigated. Churches and sects which begin by fighting for their creeds are apt to end by fighting for their own importance—which is contrary to the spirit of the Christian religion and to the express command of Christ."* That is why to many keenly religious spirits of the day the hope of world unity and human fellowship lies through inter-religious co-operation

But there is a great deal of vagueness and misunderstanding as to the nature and implications of this movement It has in the first place to be recognized that this is a new movement, this drawing together of the religions in mutual understanding and co-operation. For some at least of the orthodoxies that are to come into this new intermingling were formulated in entire ignorance of other systems. Christian orthodoxy, e g., was codified in the early centuries of the Christian era, and the Church

* L P. Jacks, *Religious Perplexities.*

Fathers who drew up the creeds, which are accepted by all orthodox Christians as fixed definitions of the faith, had not so much as heard of the Upanishads, the Buddha or the Bhagavad Gita True, early in its career the Christian Church came to know of Muhammad, but it easily dubbed him the false prophet Islam, too, in its familiar forms wears an aspect of militancy and exclusiveness But these features are less pronounced in it than in orthodox Christianity. For the Prophet himself recognized the validity of the kindred theistic systems of Judaism and Christianity, though to him they had not preserved their primitive purity Some Islamic thinkers would extend this tolerance to other religions, too, though it is highly doubtful if it can legitimately be extended to a religion like Buddhism, which is certainly not theistic, though not necessarily atheistic.

But if the inter-religious movement is new it is even more necessary For while religion can and ought to be an integrating force, welding humanity together, perhaps the only force that can do so, it has also been one of the most divisive forces in the world Religious intolerance has been responsible for some of the blackest crimes in human history. The old jibe of Dean Swift still holds true, that we have enough religion to hate one another, but not enough to love each other There is very grave danger in these days, when different religions and com-

munities are thrown together and have got to co-operate for the common good, of militant tendencies in them being exploited by interested leaders to create discord and hold up progress That is what is happening in India today, where it is the religious sentiment that is often evoked to unholy communal squabbles But we see in other countries too how religious differences stand in the way of a nation attaining unity and achieving very desirable political and social ends If religion is to justify its claim to provide a basis for human unity then the different religions must learn to co-operate with each other.

Of course there is the way of conflict and conquest, of one religion fighting its way through all others and establishing its hegemony over the whole human race. That was, and still is, the dream of the Roman Catholic Church, though it has really been shattered by the great schism of the Reformation and is not justified by the scant successes attending on the attack on non-Christian religions in other lands, and the loss of ground that Christianity has suffered in so-called Christian countries What such a religion offers is not co-operation but conversion, it means a fight unto death with other religious systems. The Roman Catholic Church, therefore, rightly keeps out of all attempts at inter-religious co-operation But the Protestant Churches seem to be realizing the need of co-operation, at least among

themselves, and are drawing very close together on the mission fields There is a comity among most Protestant missions at the present time by which they agree not to infringe each other's rights and to seek to co-operate with each other in the common task of converting "the heathen." That is because after years of conflict and claims to exclusive possession of the way of salvation they have come to agree on a few fundamentals and to agree to differ on what they have now come to see as non-essentials. What is needed is that this spirit of co-operation should be extended to include the different religions as well, for essentials as between the different religions, too, are few and simple and it ought to be possible to conceive and state these in the broadest spirit, so as to exclude no honest seeker after truth, no true believer in goodness and no real creator of beauty

It is certainly one of the most encouraging signs of the times that various efforts are being made all over the world at understanding and co-operation between the different religions A hopeful movement in India is the Inter-National Fellowship and even more its recent off-shoot the Inter-Religious Student Fellowship.* One of the best known of kindred organizations in the West is the "World Congress of Faiths" under the leadership of Sir Francis Younghusband, which aims at promoting "a spirit

* For a statement of its Aim and Basis, see Appendix I.

of fellowship among mankind through religion" It has been holding successful conferences in recent years, and following up the good work by a Congress Continuation Movement.* But there are several other attempts on similar lines, some with a longer history and a few with a more definitely universalistic basis, engaging the labours of devoted workers, following after the Great Companions of all ages and religions It is perhaps to be regretted that most of these are working in isolation from each other and that slight differences of emphasis or accidents of organization should prevent them from joining forces and becoming a strong united World Movement The Rev L J Belton in his recent book, *Creeds in Conflict*,† gives a useful conspectus of such efforts in the West.

Being a new movement, it has necessarily to go slow and face many misunderstandings and obstructions One of the commonest charges brought against it by its critics, especially those of the monopolist systems, is that it is syncretistic and will but result in adding one or more new fancy religions to the crowded world of religions But the inter-religious movement does not aim at evolving a single universal religion for all mankind That, as we have seen, is

* Its fourth World Conference was held in Paris in July 1939

† I give in Appendix II a very valuable statement of Policy and Principles for efforts at inter-religious co-operation from this book.

the dream of the militant missionary faiths, which would blot out all other religions What inter-religionism stands for is the acceptance of the need and the fact of variety in religious experience, of diversity in man's approach towards and realization of the One Eternal Reality, which is the common object of religious quest throughout the ages It admits the limitations of all human understandings of the Divine—even unique revelations are mediated through human channels—and is, therefore, humble and willing to accept light from varied sources It accepts the revelations through the spiritual geniuses of all mankind and while it does not aim at, or believe in, evolving a uniformity of creed and conduct, it looks forward to a time when the spiritually minded of all religions will unite in the appreciation of all known truth and in welcoming fresh revelations from the unspent deep resources of God.

The objectives of this movement have not been better put than by Sir S Radhakrishnan, speaking at one of the world conferences of faiths "Fellowship of faiths," says he, "which implies appreciation of other faiths, is no easy indulgence of error and weakness or lazy indifference to the issues involved It is not the intellectual's taste for moderation or the highbrow's dislike of dogma It is not the politician's love for compromise or being all things to all men; nor is it simply a negative freedom from antipathies It is an understanding insight, full trust in the basic

Reality which feeds all faiths and its power to lead us to the truth. It believes in the deeper religion of the Spirit, which will be adequate for all people, vital enough to strike deep roots, powerful to unify each individual in himself and bind us all together by the realization of our common condition and our common goal" Perhaps his own Hindu faith is a foretaste of such a fellowship and an answer to the contention that a fellowship is not possible without the co-operating faiths losing their integrity and distinctive flavour For Hinduism is not a single religion but a fellowship of faiths, sanctioning a wide variety of religious beliefs and practices. The Saivite and the Vaishnavite, the animist and the Vedantin, the worshipper of idols and the mystic have each his place within its wide portals. Is not a vaster and a wider fellowship possible, comprehending all man's diverse apprehensions of the Divine, none seeking to destroy the other, but each helping its neighbour to fulfil itself, by being faithful to its own inner light? For

> They are but broken lights of Thee,
> And Thou, O Lord, art more than they

The inter-religious movement believes in the extension of that essentially religious attitude, the attitude of fellowship and open-minded search after Truth Its spirit and aspiration are beautifully expressed in that hymn of George Matheson

Inter-Religious Co-operation

Gather us in, Thou Love that fillest all,
  Gather our rival faiths within Thy fold,
Rend each man's temple veil, and bid it fall,
  That we may know that Thou has been of old,
      Gather us in

Some seek a Father in the heavens above,
  Some ask a human image to adore,
Some crave a Spirit vast as life and love,
  Within Thy mansions we have all and more:
      Gather us in

8

Christianity and the New Social Order

JESUS once rebuked the Scribes and Pharisees for not discerning the signs of the times. If he were alive to-day he would have rebuked in no less scathing terms those who profess to follow him but are strangers to his insight and his compassion for the multitudes. For if the signs of the times tell us anything now, it is that the world is being remade, that the old accepted order of things, political, economic, and social, is yielding place to the new. But the Christian Church goes on in its old rut, hardly feeling the breath of new life that is vitalizing the world This spells disaster, for not to discern the signs of the times aright, not to be responsive to the breath of God as it re-creates the world, not to face up to the need of rethinking and refashioning the old, but to be content with a little deft patchwork here and there, and to stick to the old wine-skins, is to be found opposing God, who is ever fulfilling Himself in new ways. Here it is the words of the

Master, "He that is not with me scattereth," that are true

One of the significant things in religious thought, wherever it has felt the breath of the new spirit, is what an American writer* has called "The New Range of the Christian Conscience" As he points out, there has long existed and does still exist a disastrous gulf between individual and public morality, between the ways of private goodness and those of public righteousness, or, rather, public unrighteousness He gives a telling illustration to make his meaning clear Some years ago there died in Brooklyn, U S A, a successful industrialist At his funeral the officiating priest said, with truth and conviction, that he was a model husband, an ideal father, who made his home on earth a little haven of love and virtue That was true, but it was also true, though it was not mentioned at the funeral, that shortly before his death about fifty people working in his factories had lost their lives because their only haven of rest and repose was situated in tenement houses, through which a disastrous fire came sweeping There was an investigation into the matter, and it was proved that even the minimum requirements of the Government were not satisfied in the building of those tenement houses. The model husband and ideal father of private life was responsible for the blasting of the lives of fifty of his workmen

* Dr. V T Pomeroy

And the writer goes on to say, "Many a man has had a compassionate Christ at his side when he was *spending* his money; but he has had no such companion or looked for one when he was *making* it He spends it like the Good Samaritan, but he makes it like a brigand dividing the spoil Christianity has so far occupied only the by-ways of life, filling them with works of mercy, building schools and hospitals, sending out missionaries, and in these days providing refugee relief and sending food-ships—but it has left the highways of life largely unoccupied, and it is along these highways that great injustices, cruel exploitations, racial discriminations, political dominations and other great evils stalk the world " Can religion synthesize the needed effort to lift the world out of its present confusions, injustices and futilities, and bring in a new and better social order? If it cannot the world will have scant use for it, nay, will seek to sweep it aside And who can tell if Jesus himself will not be on the side of those who want to sweep it aside, "for why should it cumber the ground?"

One thing that has to be clearly grasped in this connection is that religion must either occupy the highways as well as the byways, the whole of life, or abdicate. No patchwork, no piecemeal solution will satisfy. Religion has always had a tendency to be content with partial solutions, with encouraging charity instead of securing justice, with saving the

individual and leaving the environment unredeemed This is futile as well as dangerous and results in the anomalies referred to above. It is widely realized now that there can be no private or individual solution to the modern world problems, that they can only be met and faced collectively in their world-wide ramifications The solidarity of mankind, man's inter-relatedness with his fellow man, the fact of our being each other's keeper, is now a demonstrable and experienced fact As Mr H. G. Wells has said, "there is no peace now but a world peace, no prosperity but a common prosperity" And Mr Wells has an interesting parable to make it vivid. He calls it the Parable of Provender Island * It is the story of three sailors and a small cabin boy shipwrecked on a desolate island After some days of enforced vegetarianism they become aware of the existence of a pig on the island and simultaneously aware of an intolerable craving for bacon But they would not set about getting it in the only sensible way in which it could be got, by jointly going for the whole pig One of them longed for a ham, another a loin-chop, the third for chitterlings, and each of them like the sensible, practical people they presumed themselves to be, with no nonsense about them, wanted that and nothing more Only the observant little cabin boy suggested that they should capture the whole pig But him they accused of

* H G Wells, *What are We to Do with our Lives?*

swelled head and impudent, impractical idealism So each of them separately, without so much as telling the others, tried to get his little bit of the pig But they were all foiled and came to grief. The roast-loin hunter, e g , after long lying in wait, jumped upon the very loin he desired, but the pig bit him deep and septically The boy alone tried the sensible plan of making a pitfall for the whole pig, but as he was very small and as the others did not help him, he could not make it well and deep enough and so the pig escaped Thus the pig was left intact and in sole possession of the island when shortly afterwards a ship touched on it and carried away all four of them, the moral of it all being that it is sheer folly, and not sanity or realism, to attempt to reform one corner of the world without boldly planning to transform the whole—thus making, in Christian language, all the kingdoms of the world the Kingdom of God Was not that the vision the prophet saw when he spoke of the world being full of the knowledge of God as the waters cover the sea?

The present world situation is such that if religion will not make the needed effort to realize justice on earth other forces will, sweeping religion aside. For the demand for economic and social justice has become irresistible The new factor in the situation is that the dispossessed of all countries have become aware of their plight and of their power Therein lay the revolutionary appeal of the clarion call of

Marx and Engels: "Workers of the world unite. You have nothing to lose but your chains" Their organization may be delayed, their efforts may be thwarted and groups of them may be misled; but they are bound to assert themselves and achieve their ends If religion does not provide them with the sanctions for this realization of justice they will seek it under other sanctions But the most interesting and challenging thing is that real religion does provide these sanctions, that religion is entirely at one with the Communist in his demand for elemental justice on earth This, e g, is what some of the luminaries of religion have said on the matter: "Is not this the fast that I have chosen, to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the bands of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house, when thou seest the naked that thou cover him and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?"* Or again, this of the prophet Micah: "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God?" Jesus Christ definitely stands in the line of these prophets, endorsing and fulfilling their demand and making the same relentless demand of his followers Is not that the meaning of his marvellous

* Isaiah lviii

parable of the final judgment, when men are judged not by what they professed but what they did to their fellow-men? Professor MacMurray has rightly said that what started the present revolt against religion was the saying of Karl Marx, "Let us turn from ideas to reality Let us look not at people's theories but at their actions " And Jesus, the great realist, also agrees "Not by their professions but by their fruits," said he. Dare modern Christianity face that test?

There has recently been a revival of what is claimed to be the Christian way of changing the world, through changing the individual. That is the claim of the Oxford Groups It is a big claim to make and is not justified by their achievements so far, nor even by the long record of Christian preaching and persuasion, but it must be admitted that they indicate the religious way to the solution of the world problem But the Groups do not seem to have sufficiently recognized what has been called "the brutal character of the behaviour of all human collectives, and the power of self-interest and collective egoism in all inter-group relations." "Society," as Professor Niebhur* has pointed out, "is so much more immoral than the individual, that the methods by which the lives and conduct of individuals have been raised to higher and higher levels can be expected to achieve but relatively small results when applied to classes and nations It is mere

* R Niebhur, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*

romancing," he continues, "to suppose that the preaching and teaching of the Social Gospel movement can do more than a little toward the achievement of social and international justice" Commenting on this, Professor J B Pratt wrote some time ago in a *Hibbert Journal* article, "Merely to feed the hungry and clothe the naked, to give to him that asketh and to cultivate that charity which suffereth long and is kind, are not enough to answer the needs of our day The situation involves complicated economic principles, and the achievement of the social ideal would seem to require not only exhortation and education, but also some sort of political action" It is this latter that Christian Churches and groups have so far been unwilling or unable to take. The Oxford Groups, in spite of their claim to be guided by the "four absolutes," and in spite of a new and welcome interest in social service, seem far from having recognized the need for such collective action

Perhaps the only convincing instance in the world today of the way of religion applied to the needs of the present situation, of individual regeneration going deep enough and far enough to effect world regeneration, is the Satyāgraha movement of Mahatma Gandhi He has realized the need for collective action, the inevitability of conflict to achieve higher social ends. He goes far beyond the Christian and the Groupist preacher in organizing resistance to collective injustice, but unlike the secularist the

power with which he would challenge entrenched injustice is the power of the Spirit, the power of love. That is the religious way of achieving world regeneration The Communist, seeking an ultimate social good, would invoke class hatred as a necessary means to its realization. But the wisdom of the sages, as well as the experience of history, teaches us that means condition ends "Not by hatred does hatred cease, but by love does hatred cease; this is always its nature," said the Buddha of old, "He that takes the sword will perish by the sword," said Christ five hundred years later. And today it will be widely admitted that it was the violence of the Communist that provoked the violence of the Fascist and the Nazi, to make the world the veritable madhouse of violence that it is today

But it is no use religion claiming that it knows the better way. The supreme question is "Can it make that way effective and that in time to prevent disaster?" For it is, as Mr. H. G. Wells has said, "a race between time and disaster." If religion is to do that it has to set about its business with far more zeal and expedition than it has yet shown. It is true, says Dr L P. Jacks,* that the injunction, "What thou doest do quickly," was spoken to Judas Iscariot. But "does it follow," he asks, "that 'What thou doest do slowly, putting it off, if it so pleases, for fifteen centuries' was intended to be the motto of the Christian Church?"

* Dr L P Jacks, *Religious Perplexities*.

9

Religion—A Revolutionary Force

An advocate of religion these days is forced to adopt an apologetic attitude, as if religion is something one is half-ashamed of, an infection like measles which one would fain keep secret This is in glaring contrast with the position religion once held in the life and thought of mankind and with the claims still made for it by those who cling to it. In former days nothing roused so much enthusiasm as the observances of religion, and religious leaders were honoured above everyone else Today it is the politicians who dominate our thinking and demand our obeisance. That is symbolic of the change that has insensibly but surely come over the outlook of people Organized institutional religion has fallen into a decrepitude from which even frenzied recalls to religion cannot rescue it

But organized religion has nothing but itself to blame for this state of things It has brought it upon itself by its indifference to the vital issues of life and its acquiescence in existing injustices If there is one

thing that characterizes the modern mind it is its belief in life; its conviction that this life is good and can be made rich and happy for all. The vast potentialities that Science has opened up to the vision of mankind have revolutionized man's outlook on life and given him a new zest and joy in it The modern mind is not in a mood to listen to the whisperings of religion that all this is a delusion and a snare and that attention should be turned away from these things to things to come and things not of this world. It rightly refuses to give up the joys and opportunities within its reach for something which the human eye hath not seen, nor the human ear heard, but into which a good deal of human fantasy has entered. And when it sees the advocates of other-worldly religions acquiescing and sharing in the spoils of injustice, as in the case of organized religion in imperialist countries, or meekly submitting to exploitation, as in the pseudo-spiritual religions of subject nations like India, its sense of justice is outraged and it is often roused to violent opposition to all manifestations of religion That is how one can account for the antagonism to religion of some high-souled thinkers and movements, who are themselves striving to establish righteousness and justice on earth

But a significant thing, a thing that anti-religious thinkers and movements all over the world have failed to realize, is that real religion is at one with

them in this revolt against the false. For real, vital religion has all along been a revolutionary force in the world, inspiring all the great advances humanity has made in its corporate life Far from being a spent force, it is perhaps the one force that can yet weld humanity together, can yet help to realize and maintain that goal of justice, peace and prosperity, which advancing knowledge has brought within human reach, but of which man's inherent selfishness still baulks him For in its essence religion is that which lifts man above self and links him with his fellow beings and with the Totality of Being, however that may be conceived. This distinction between true and false religion is fundamental. All the great religious teachers of the world have been persons who sought to emancipate the human mind from the trammels of tradition and to set it free to realize its kinship with the Universe But they have all alike been unfortunate in the followers they have had It would seem as if the human mind has an inherent tendency to conservatism and this has nowhere been in greater evidence than in the realm of religion For the insights of the great religious teachers, instead of spurring the race on to higher and higher levels of realization, have each been codified and set up as exclusive and even conflicting systems of salvation. It is sad to think how humanity has treated its religious leaders, rejecting and despising them when alive, giving them the cup of poison to

drink or lifting them on the cross of shame and, worse still, bowing down in senseless adoration of them afterwards, but all the time leaving their teachings unheeded What do these great men care for being called "Lord, Lord" by those who follow not their precepts? It has been the same from Socrates and Jesus down to Gandhi in modern days The great religious teachers of the world were not in their days regarded as religious but were even accused of corrupting youth and denying the gods

Mention of the gods leads me to speak of a great misconception regarding these teachers Religion is so much identified with belief and dogma that it would be incredible if one were to say that the great luminaries of religion never thought or taught dogmatically The systems that have been foisted on them have so overlaid their teachings that it is difficult to realize that they were more system-breakers than system-builders They were all Experimenters with Truth, who felt after the great realities of life, and blazed trails of noble living Their conflict with the men of their days, particularly with the custodians of religious systems, was that they questioned these systems and felt after larger and more satisfying truth It is true they were all, in a measure, some more, some less, bound by the beliefs and conceptions of their time and people, but they all alike stood for progress and change, and it is this progress and change that is resisted by

the system-makers of all time and all religions The very idea of God, which most of these teachers accepted from current thought, has been filled by them with such ever-broadening and ennobling content that there is not another word in human language that has undergone an equal change Far from clinging to narrow and exploded ways of thought, these great teachers, if they were alive today, would have been abreast of modern thinking What can be more modern, e g , than this saying of the Buddha, 2,500 years ago "Do not believe in what ye have heard, do not believe in traditions because they have been handed down for many generations, do not believe in anything because it is rumoured and spoken of by many, do not believe in that as truth to which you have become attached by habit; do not believe merely on the authority of your elders and teachers—after observation and analysis, when it agrees with reason and is conducive to the good and benefit of one and all, then accept it and live up to it" That modern religion wherever it is real is carrying on and forward this spirit of search and quest for truth is seen from the great saying of Mahatma Gandhi, "Truth is God" If the modern rationalist, who so shies at the idea of God, would but go to the fountain-heads of religious inspiration, he would, like the young Indian leader Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru, himself not a man of religion, admit himself to be "a

humble camp follower of the Grand Army of the Religious Soul in its fearless search after Truth at all costs." For that is what religion in its essence is, and so long as man is surrounded by mystery and set in the midst of constant change he will feel the fascination of the quest after the Eternal and the Abiding What is needed is that the religious spirit should be rescued from the monopolists and system-makers of all religions and set free to establish its contacts with the Eternal in the light of ever-increasing knowledge

But if the religious spirit has been thwarted and cramped in its quest of truth by system-makers, their influence has been even more pernicious in the practical results that should flow from religion For real religion sees humanity as the offspring of one Eternal Love and all mankind as brothers But organized religion has sought to restrict and confine this love within narrow limits. And it has often allied itself with the powers that be and acquiesced in existing injustices and oppressions There has too often been a tendency in it to direct attention from this world, with its many injustices and inequalities, to a fancied future world where these would be righted. But here again real, vital religion is at one with the modern demand for justice for all here on earth We see this aspect of religion clearest of all in the long and glorious line of Hebrew prophets. In burning, scathing words, which have come

ringing down the centuries, they demanded righteousness and justice to the common man in the name of the God of all creation. To one who is conversant with Jewish prophecy Karl Marx, himself a Jew, stands in the line of succession of these great prophets which this remarkable race has given to the world Listen to one of them, the prophet Amos. "Let judgment roll down as waters and righteousness as a mighty stream" Their denunciations of the idle rich and the oppressors of the poor are couched in words the sting of which time has not dulled. They are entirely at one with Marx and his followers in their denunciation of religion which is a cloak for exploitation of the poor. Speaking in the name of God one of them declared, concerning the much-vaunted religious practices of his people "I hate, I despise your feasts and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies Take away from me the noise of your songs" Karl Marx has but recaptured and reiterated the emphasis on social justice which was the keynote of Jewish prophecy Here again the distinction between true and false religion is fundamental It would be folly not to claim the comradeship, and draw upon the inspiration, of these great religious leaders of the race in man's struggle to realize the better life on earth.

What is needed is an open repudiation of false religion that teaches people to be content with their lot on earth, whether it be in the quest of a false

spirituality or in the hope of a realm of future rewards and punishments Coupled with this there must be a stern demand for justice and equality in the name of real religion But this demand of religion has so far lacked a technique of action whereby it could be pressed home and made to yield results Religion has so far relied on preaching and propaganda, and has therefore had to be content with individual successes only It is idle to hope that where twenty centuries or more of preaching and propaganda has not succeeded continued doses of it will be more effective in modern days Nor does the urgency of the situation, verging as it does on the edge of catastrophe, justify reliance on mere moral appeal What is needed is a technique of religious mass-action And that is what Mahatma Gandhi's Satyāgraha bids fair to supply. It is the principle of Love, which religion has all along testified to as the Law of Life, applied to the stern realities of the world around us. It resists all injustice in the sure conviction that justice will and must triumph It refuses to acquiesce in evil because it believes that good and not evil is the foundation and meaning of life It consciously affirms what is only implied in the Communist belief that the highest social order is bound to triumph in the end

It is this belief that forms the whole differentia between religious and secularist thought in its reaction to present reality We have seen how real,

vital religion is at one with the best secularist thought in its attempt to bring in a new and better order of things in this world But while secularism can offer no guarantee that its ideal will triumph, religion is confident of a cosmic backing to its venture. Nay, more, religion with its belief in man as an offering of Divine Love, sharing in the life of the Universe, makes its confident appeal to the human heart to see this better order realized But secularist thought lacking this confidence, this faith in man, would resort to speedy, violent methods to establish and maintain the rule of justice Dostoievsky, in a famous novel, pictures the great choice before mankind as that between the Grand Inquisitor, representing a benevolent autocracy, and Jesus, symbolizing the spirit of religion The Grand Inquisitor, loving man, but despairing of him, would deny him the gift of freedom to ensure him justice But Jesus, loving man and believing in him, in spite of the mess that man has made of the gift of freedom, would seek and maintain justice through freedom. It is clear which is the grander, though the more difficult and daring enterprise If freedom, if Democracy, is to survive in the world along with justice, then we must look to religion with its faith in man to realize it for us The way to it may be, as this book has tried to show, the way shown by Mahatma Gandhi, the way of Suffering Love, Love resisting evil, bearing upon itself the conse-

quences of evil, but refusing to yield to it, or to repay evil with evil, but overcoming it It is the old way, the way of the Buddha and of Socrates; the way supremely illustrated by the cross of Jesus of Nazareth. But it yet awaits application to the everyday problems of man, the perplexing problem of the relations, not only between individuals but between nations as well It may be that, as so often in the past, light and leadership in religion is breaking out again from the East

APPENDICES

I

THE following is the Aim and Basis of the All-Kerala Inter-religious Student Fellowship, which might give a lead in the matter to all India, adopted at its first conference, held at Alwaye, South India, in May 1937

We believe that the religious attitude is a thing of permanent value to mankind, individually and collectively, and consider it, wherever it is found, deserving of reverent recognition. Amidst the conflicting claims made on behalf of different religions, all of which have sprung from this common attitude, we believe there is an urgent need for a full and free exchange of our differing religious experiences, in a spirit of mutual respect, appreciation and sympathy We consider that for such mutual respect and sympathy to be real it is absolutely necessary that no member of the Fellowship should claim for his religion any exclusive and final possession of truth

We believe that such an interchange of experiences will lead to —

(*a*) An enrichment of one another's religious life;

(*b*) Mutual respect, understanding and tolerance, and

(*c*) Co-operation in purifying and strengthening the religious attitude of mind as against the irreligious or materialistic attitude, as the one attitude from which our personal, social, national and international problems have to be tackled

In order that each may bring into this Fellowship the very best that he can, we desire to explore fully the value of our religious traditions and disciplines and present them for the benefit of all But we do not desire to persuade any within the Fellowship to our own religious belief and practice

We realize that any attempt to weaken the hold of the truth of any religion upon mankind is to weaken religion itself Therefore we strive not to weaken but to strengthen each other by mutual respect, trust and co-operation

We seek to help one another more fully to understand and to live up to the best in all religions

II

The following is the Rev L J Belton's* very valuable statement of principles and policy that ought to guide attempts at inter-religious fellowship, born of years of experience of efforts in that field —

(1) "Pat on the back" tea-parties are of little practical avail, no inter-religious fellowship can fully achieve its purpose by conducting itself in the manner of a mutual admiration society If it tries to do so it encourages tacit dishonesty, for in the interest of policy and for the sake of politeness, people will tend to assume towards the other man's point of view an attitude which in sober reality they cannot honestly adopt—and to say tomorrow, elsewhere, what they dare not say today.

(2) Tolerance is not enough Tolerance is easy, but it is sometimes question-begging and negative One should, of course, concede to others that same right to express their views which one expects for oneself, but not on that account ought one to concur, or let it be assumed that one concurs, in views one holds to be fundamentally erroneous. Inter-religious fellowship should not demand of us that we tolerate

* L J Belton, *Creeds in Conflict* (J. M. Dent, 1938)

superstition or acquiesce, for the sake of harmony, in what we believe to be social wrongs. But criticism, if it cannot be avoided, should be constructive and helpful, and courteously expressed. Each man should be met, so far as that be possible, on his own level, with all the sympathy and understanding that are ours to command

(3) Inter-religious fellowship is incompatible with exclusive claims, by whomsoever they are made Any religious society or Church which assumes to be the vehicle of a unique and final revelation is self-excluded from inter-religious fellowship and does better to remain in the safe seclusion of its own sheepfold than to mingle with "wolves" in sheep's clothing outside the fold In this respect the Roman Catholic Church has at least the merit and logic of its own uncompromising exclusiveness, for the loyal Romanist will never consent to meet on equal terms the members of other faiths, whether they be Protestant Christians or "Pagans" they are heretics from the standpoint of Rome

(4) The will to proselytize is likewise incompatible with the spirit which should actuate all gatherings for inter-religious fellowship. This means in practice not that the members of the more militant of the missionary faiths are to be summarily shown the door (for many a man individually is larger-minded and larger-hearted than the institutional faith to which he belongs), but that within the

fellowship propaganda and polemics should be barred as inconsistent with the fundamental basis of fellowship and as discourteous to others whose views may be different from one's own Least of all, it need hardly be said, should zealots be allowed to use the inter-religious platform for open or veiled advocacy of their particular faith When that is done harmony is destroyed and the platform is at once in danger of collapse If at times fervent believers are asked to expound their own convictions, such exposition need involve neither an assumption of superiority nor the will to convert

(5) At the same time no less impermissible, or should I say undesirable and destructive of fellowship, is the open advocacy of a synthetic faith compounded of fragments of many existing faiths. One cannot make a new religion by artificial selection—one may try but one will not succeed Even if one were to succeed, what final advantage would there be, one may well ask, in a new religion which could maintain its integrity only at the cost of uniformity and ultimately, it might be, of repeating the errors of authoritarian religion? Anything which imposes from without that which man should find within is in the long run a hindrance to spiritual understanding.

(6) Acknowledgement of diversity is a *sine qua non* of inter-religious fellowship Uniformity of belief is possible only among slave-minds, and is neither

possible nor desirable in a community of thinking (i e awakened) people An inter-religious fellowship should recognize the fact of diversity in tradition, conviction and temperamental needs

(7) But in virtue of its ideal aims, an inter-religious fellowship will seek to mark and to emphasize those teachings which all religions, under varying symbolisms, hold in common Religion is that which binds and in this sense everything that is divisive, local and non-essential in the several faiths may gradually be relegated to the background and finally set aside, as universal truths emerge into the light and are recognized for what they are Thus the more far-seeing and intuitive enthusiasts for inter-religious fellowship will gain a new, more adventurous, more inclusive faith and a deeper understanding of the Design of all existence.